

VZCZCXRO5307  
PP RUEHAO  
DE RUEHCV #1104/01 1161319  
ZNY CCCCC ZZH  
P 261319Z APR 06  
FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4222  
INFO RUEHBO/AMEMBASSY BOGOTA PRIORITY 6357  
RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA PRIORITY 5406  
RUEHCP/AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN PRIORITY 0140  
RUEHGT/AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA PRIORITY 0891  
RUEHLP/AMEMBASSY LA PAZ PRIORITY 1927  
RUEHPE/AMEMBASSY LIMA PRIORITY 0150  
RUEHMU/AMEMBASSY MANAGUA PRIORITY 1158  
RUEHME/AMEMBASSY MEXICO PRIORITY 3707  
RUEHMN/AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO PRIORITY 0832  
RUEHZP/AMEMBASSY PANAMA PRIORITY 1074  
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY 0419  
RUEHPU/AMEMBASSY PORT AU PRINCE PRIORITY 0150  
RUEHQT/AMEMBASSY QUITO PRIORITY 2006  
RUEHDG/AMEMBASSY SANTO DOMINGO PRIORITY 0138  
RUEHAO/AMCONSUL CURACAO PRIORITY 0762  
RUEHGL/AMCONSUL GUAYAQUIL PRIORITY 0436  
RUEHMI/USOFFICE FRC FT LAUDERDALE PRIORITY 3020  
RUMIAAA/HQ USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL PRIORITY  
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 CARACAS 001104

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

HQSOUTHCOM FOR POLAD  
DEPT PASS TO AID/OTI RPORTER  
FRC FT LAUDERDALE FOR CLAMBERT  
COPENHAGEN FOR DLAWTON

E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/25/2016

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [KDEM](#) [VE](#)

SUBJECT: HAITI'S PRESIDENT-ELECT MAKES BRIEF VISIT TO  
VENEZUELA

Classified By: Political Counselor Robert Downes for reasons 1.4 (d).

-----  
SUMMARY  
-----

1. (U) Haiti's President-elect Rene Preval arrived in Caracas April 24 for a brief bilateral meeting with Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez, which included discussions on energy and implementing effective strategies for improving the country's social conditions. During a joint press conference from Miraflores, Chavez and Preval announced Haiti would officially be incorporated into the PetroCaribe organization on May 12 during a ceremony in Port au Prince. In advance of the official signing ceremony, which Vice President Jose Vicente Rangel is expected to attend, Petroleos de Venezuela (PDVSA) officials plan to travel to Haiti on May 2. Preval lamented that although he did not possess Chavez great elocution skills, he was eager to implement an Alo President-style broadcast in Haiti. End Summary.

2. (U) During the Chavez-Preval press conference, local media sources solicited questions regarding the BRV,s decision to sever ties with the Andean Community of Nations (CAN). Chavez said his government would not reconsider its decision unless the governments of Peru and Colombia reconsidered free trade agreements with the United States. Colombian President Alvaro Uribe said April 24 his government would not suspend agreements with the "world's largest market", calling Chavez' April 24 ultimatum unfair.

-----  
ENERGY, SOCIAL PROGRAMS, AND CREDIT TO THE POOR

-----

13. (U) On April 24, Chavez and Preval, spent the afternoon in private, bilateral meetings at Miraflores, discussing energy agreements, and initiatives to improve overall living conditions in Haiti. In an effort to stimulate economic and social development in Haiti, Chavez said the two countries would cooperate with Cuba to establish social "missions" in the areas of public health and education, and that Venezuela's Bank of Social and Economic Development (Bandes) would sign an agreement with Haiti's state-operated bank, allowing the country's financial institutions to extend credit to the poor. The BRV also agreed to follow through on a donation of diesel fuel, offered months ago, to local hospitals and schools. Preval told local media sources that a group of Venezuelan and Cuban specialists are expected to visit Haiti in coming months to develop an effective reconstruction plan for the country's urban and rural communities. To date, the BRV has provided no cost estimates for its assistance the Haitian government.

14. (U) During a joint press conference on April 24, Chavez announced Haiti would become PetroCaribe,s newest member. Officials from both countries reportedly agreed to sign the PetroCaribe agreement in Port au Prince on May 12, corresponding with the date Preval is expected to assume the Haitian presidency. Representatives from Petroleos de Venezuela (PDVSA) will travel to Haiti on May 2 to prepare for the official signing ceremony. Vice-President Jose Vicente Rangel is expected to head the BRV,s delegation for the event.

CARACAS 00001104 002 OF 002

-----

WHAT TO EXPECT FROM PREVAL

-----

15. (U) Preval commented April 24 in Caracas that UN forces would remain in Haiti until law enforcement and judicial bodies had been strengthened. The government, he added, had a responsibility to maintain security and it would be irresponsible to call for an immediate withdrawal of UN troops, considering Haiti's current political situation.

16. (U) Regarding Chavez, weekly Alo Presidente broadcasts, Haiti's president-elect said April 24 although he didn't possess Chavez, elocution skills, he was eager to implement an Alo Presidente-style broadcast in Haiti.

-----

COMMENT

-----

17. (C) Chavez, attempts to court potential allies are a common phenomenon that is likely to continue and strengthen as the elections for the UN Security Council draw near. There are no shortages of Latin American, Caribbean, and African countries eager to cash in on the BRV,s "generosity", and significant oil receipts resulting from record-high petroleum prices should enable Chavez to continue to try and buy friends around the globe; even if there are no real assurances that he'll ever receive a return on his investments. Since stroking Chavez' ego seems to be the principal prerequisite for obtaining preferential oil agreements, and humanitarian and development assistance, it is probable that these countries, leaders will continue to play poker with Chavez until the cash stops flowing. However, Chavez' actions towards Haiti, given its extreme vulnerability, may serve to increase the country's problems.

BROWNFIELD